The main difference is core material and water safety. Vinyl is 100% plastic and waterproof. Laminate uses a wood-based fiberboard core and resists water poorly, though it feels harder and resists scratches better. Both cost a similar mid-range budget. Reddit · r/Flooring +5

Water Resistance

- **Vinyl:** Waterproof. Safe for bathrooms, kitchens, and basements. Spills will not warp the planks.
- **Laminate:** Water-resistant at best. Standing water seeps into seams and swells the wood core. Not for high-moisture rooms. YouTube · Best Flooring … +4

Durability and Scratches

- **Vinyl:** Softer and more flexible. Dents under heavy furniture, and sharp claws or objects can gouge it.
- **Laminate:** Harder top surface. Resists pet scratches and surface wear better, but chips or cracks if a heavy metal tool drops on it. Reddit · r/Flooring +5

Look and Feel

- **Vinyl:** Feels softer and warmer underfoot, but can feel slightly plastic.
- **Laminate:** Thicker, firmer, and mimics real hardwood realism much more convincingly. Reddit · r/Flooring +4